

# A LOOK AT READING ATHLETIC'S KING OF BUNTS

## VETERAN SS MACKAY'S UNIQUE TALENT HAS NO PARALLEL IN BASEBALL

READING, PENN. (Aug. 17, 1873) – Meet Gordon Mackay...



Mackay, a 33-year-old from Coatbridge, Scotland, has been Reading's everyday Shortstop since entering the National Base Ball Organization ahead of the 1870 season.

Upon first glance Mackay seems like nothing out of the ordinary, as any scouting report on him will tell you that he's a [fairly average](#) baseball player:

CONTACT: 5/10, HIT FOR AVG: 5/10, GAP POWER: 5.5/10, BATTING EYE: 4/10  
DEFENSE (SS): 7/10, SPEED: 8/10, STEALS: 7/10, BASERUNNING: 9/10

Mackay's [playing record](#) has been average as well. With his fourth season in the NBBO having just come to an end, Mackay's career batting line is .286/.298/.380 with a .677 OPS and a 93 OPS+. His average WAR per season has been 0.8, and his fielding at SS has been roughly NBBO average.

However, there is one skill that Gordon Mackay possesses that is so great that not a single opposing player or manager in the NBBO even attempts to stop him when he tries it: his ability to move teammates from base to base with a Sacrifice Bunt.

While Mackay is average or good at nearly every skill, writers, coaches, & scouts who have observed him during his four seasons in the NBBO have graded his ability to make Sacrifice Bunts at a "10+/10". If there is zero or one out and men on base, Mackay will lay a ball down in perfect position to move runners. It doesn't matter how the defense is positioned, or what the incoming pitch is, or what the weather is like. Mackay squares his bat, and everyone moves forward a base.

A perfect case in point: the just concluded 1873 NBBO season. Typically, in a seventy-game season the most technically gifted bunt masters among the batsmen in the NBBO have been capable of laying down 30-35 Sacrifice Bunts. Mackay has

taken that number and moved it in a direction nobody thought possible. After laying down his final sacrifice of the season on Sunday, Mackay finished 1873 with an absolutely absurd [FIFTY-THREE SACRIFICE BUNTS IN SEVENTY GAMES PLAYED](#).

Nobody is even sure how Mackay does it, and if Mackay has a method then he's kept it a secret. Some have spread rumors that Mackay lines up opposite a modified cannon and practices bunting baseballs that fly at him with impossible speed. Others claim that he goes home during the winter and spends time working on tracking the ball in the winds of the Western Isles of Scotland. Others have speculated that Mackay has a secret in his bat that allows him such bunting proficiency.

Some, like Konrad Jensen, have decided to master the art of contact hitting. Others, like Jim Creighton, have mastered the art of pitching with power. Some, like James Goodman, have devoted their time to mastering command over the ball itself to fool batsmen. Still others, like Anthony Mascherino, have gained mastery over their work in the field. Even further, men like James Burke have perfected the skill of terrorizing opponents on the basepaths.

Apparently, instead of doing any of the above Gordon Mackay has decided to become the Da Vinci of bunting. If nothing else, it's a skill that he has perfected to the point that it will cause the baseball world to remember him for a long time.